

Comment on the proposed conservation of the specific name of and designation of a neotype for *Spongia ventilabrum* Linnaeus, 1767 (currently *Phakellia ventilabrum*; Porifera)

(Case 3216; see BZN 60: 16–19)

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As the result of a misunderstanding at the proof stage of this application, the Commission Secretariat introduced an error. Although Linnaeus (1767) originally spelt the specific name *ventilabra*, Johnson (1842) changed it to *ventilabrum*. Subsequently Johnson's spelling has prevailed (see Article 33.3.1 of the Code; the Secretariat holds a list of 28 references that show prevailing usage). Accordingly, we make the following corrections to para. 11 of our application:

(2) . . . type species by original designation *Spongia ventilabrum* Linnaeus, 1767;

(3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *ventilabrum*, as published in the binomen *Spongia ventilabrum* Linnaeus, 1767 . . .

Comments on the proposed conservation of *Melania curvicostata* Reeve, 1861 and *Goniobasis paupercula* Lea, 1862 (Mollusca, Gastropoda) by the designation of a neotype for *Melania curvicostata* (Reeve, 1861)

(Case 3232; see BZN 60: 109–112)

(1) Wallace E. Holznagel

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I fully support the application to set aside all previous type fixations and designate the specimen Florida Museum of Natural History 292208 as the neotype of *Melania curvicostata* Reeve, 1861 and to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the specific names of *M. curvicostata* and *Goniobasis paupercula* Lea, 1862. At present there is considerable interest and research in the molluscan fauna of the southeastern United States, which is considered to be a hot spot of freshwater biological diversity. To understand adequately the biodiversity of this region or any region and make informed conservation recommendations researchers need type material that truly reflects the original species description.

The following four correspondents (2)–(5) have all pointed out the same Code-compliant resolution to this case.

(2) L.B. Holthuis

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It is stated in the application that the specimen figured as *Melania curvicostata* by Reeve, 1861 is different from all the existing syntypes and probably is the only one of

the type series to belong to the species currently known as *Elimia curvicostata*. The Commission has been asked to use the plenary power to designate a neotype for this species. Would it not be more logical for the authors to select the figured specimen (Reeve, 1861, pl. 58, species 462) as the lectotype to fix the identity of the species in the way wanted by the authors without action by the Commission? This can be done in relation to Article 74.4 of the Code.

(3) Arthur E. Bogan

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There is no confusion between the two taxa *E. curvicostata* from Georgia and Florida and *E. paupercula* from creeks in northern Alabama (e.g. Tryon, 1873, pp. 192, 292; Burch & Tottenham, 1980, pp. 136, 137, 140, 141; Thompson, 1984, pp. 25–27). Thompson & Mihalcik presented no evidence of any previous assumption of holotype or designation of a lectotype for *Melania curvicostata* Reeve, 1861. The designation of the figured syntype of *M. curvicostata* as the lectotype would fix the identity of the species clearly illustrated by Reeve (see Articles 72.5.6; 74.4 of the Code).

Additional reference

Tryon, G.W. Jr. 1873. Land and fresh-water shells of North America. Part 4. Strepomatidae (American melanians). *Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections*, **16**: 1–435.

(4) Daniel L. Graf

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According to Chambers (1990, p. 239), the types associated with some of Reeve's names, including *Melania curvicostata* and *M. densicostata*, 'could not be located' in the BMNH. I would like to know more about these specimens and the evidence for their validity as type material. Specimens in J.G. Anthony's personal collection, now deposited in the MCZ (Turner, 1946), have been recognized as figured specimens of nominal species described by Reeve (see Graf, 2001). Throughout their application the authors seem to have a genuine expectation that there should be a specimen that looks just like that figure. If Reeve's figure of *M. curvicostata* was based on a single (now missing) shell that may possibly be found (and the figure of that shell is adequate to recognize the species), would it not be more appropriate to simply designate the figured specimen as the lectotype under Article 74.4 of the Code?

Article 74.4 allows that the 'designation of an illustration or description of a syntype as a lectotype is to be treated as designation of the specimen illustrated or described; the fact that the specimen no longer exists or cannot be traced does not of itself invalidate the designation' (see Article 72.5.6).

Additional reference

Turner, R.D. 1946. John Gould Anthony, with a bibliography and catalogue of his species. *Occasional Papers on Mollusks, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University*, **1**(8): 81–108.

(5) Russell L. Minton

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The BMNH syntypes would become paralectotypes in need of re-identification if the authors believe that these specimens are in fact *Elimia paupercula* (Lea, 1862). No other action need be taken concerning *M. densicostata* (simple synonymy) or *G. paupercula*. The Commission may still want to place the names on the Official List.

(6) Dietrich Kadolsky

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1. *Melania curvicostata* Reeve, 1861 (currently *Elimia curvicostata*) is a junior primary homonym of *Melania curvicostata* Melleville, 1843 (p. 94, pl. 4, figs. 10–12) (currently *Melanatria curvicostata*). The latter name has been treated since its introduction as the valid name for a fossil from the Early Eocene (Sparnacien) of the Paris Basin, for which no other synonym is available (see Wenz, 1929, pp. 2620–2621). North American species have long been removed from the genus *Melania* Lamarck, 1799 (= *Thiara* Röding, 1798), which has historically served as a hold-all for many freshwater CERITHIOIDEA (now classified in the families THIARIDAE, PACHYCHILIDAE and PLEUROCERIDAE). It is probable that neither name has been classified in the genus *Melania* since 1899. However, this primary homonymy should be referred to the Commission under Article 23.9.5 of the Code.

2. The fact that *Melania curvicostata* Reeve, 1861 is invalid as a junior primary homonym removes a potential threat to the name *Goniobasis paupercula* Lea, 1862, which Thompson and Mihalcik want to protect.

3. I would prefer that the Code be strictly applied in this case. However, if a neotype is to be designated as proposed in the application, I wonder why an empty shell has been proposed considering the importance of anatomy and molecular genetics in molluscan taxonomy. Perhaps the applicants or others familiar with these taxa may wish to elaborate on this point.

Additional references

- Melleville, M. 1843. Mémoire sur les sables tertiaires inférieures du bassin de Paris, avec la description de 78 espèces de coquilles fossiles inédites de ce terrain. *Annales des Sciences géologiques ou Archives de Géologie* . . . , **2**: 1–29, 77–120.
- Wenz, W. 1929. *Gastropoda extramarina tertiaria*, pt. 40. Pp. 2503–2886 in: *Fossilium Catalogus*, I. *Animalia*. Junk, Berlin.